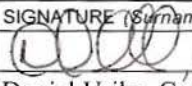
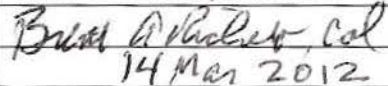


# STAFF SUMMARY SHEET

	TO	ACTION	SIGNATURE (Surname), GRADE AND DATE		TO	ACTION	SIGNATURE (Surname), GRADE AND DATE
1	USAFA/ DFF	sign	 COL, MAR 12 Daniel Uribe, Col, 12 Mar 2012	6			
2	USAFA/ DFER	approve	 COL Brian A. Hatcher, Col 14 Mar 2012	7			
3	USAFA/ DFF	action		8			
4				9			
5				10			

SURNAME OF ACTION OFFICER AND GRADE	SYMBOL	PHONE	TYPIST'S INITIALS	SUSPENSE DATE
Dr. Ismenia De Souza	DFF	333-1787	isd	20120314
SUBJECT Clearance for Material for Public Release				DATE 20120309
USAFA-DF-PA-122				

## SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE. To provide security and policy review on the document at Tab 1 prior to release to the public.

## 2. BACKGROUND.

Authors: Cadet Amanda M Johnson

Title: Lessons From a Comparison of Tunisia and Algeria: The Path to Democracy

Circle one: Abstract    Tech Report    Journal Article    Speech    \*Paper\*    Presentation    Poster  
Thesis/Dissertation    Book    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Check all that apply (For Communications Purposes):

☐ CRADA (Cooperative Research and Development Agreement) exists

☐ Photo/ Video Opportunities    ☐ STEM-outreach Related    ☐ New Invention/ Discovery/ Patent

Description: This case study comparing the political development of Tunisia and Algeria outlines the importance of education, women's rights, and nation-supporting militaries to the success, and even initiation, of a democratic revolution.

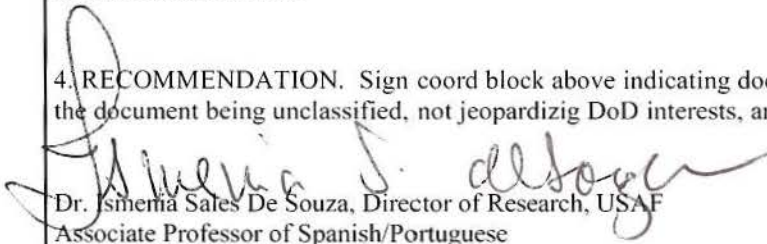
Release Information: This paper will be submitted to Colorado Springs Undergraduate Research Forum, held April 28, 2012

Previous Clearance information:

Recommended Distribution Statement: Distribution A, Approved for Public release, distribution unlimited.

## 3. DISCUSSION. N/A

4. RECOMMENDATION. Sign coord block above indicating document is suitable for public release. Suitability is based solely on the document being unclassified, not jeopardizing DoD interests, and accurately portraying official party.

  
Dr. Ismenia Sales De Souza, Director of Research, USAF  
Associate Professor of Spanish/Portuguese

2 Tabs  
1. Abstract  
2. Paper

Title (less than 250 characters):

The Path to Democracy: Comparing Tunisia and Algeria

-or-

Lessons From a Comparison of Tunisia and Algeria: The Path to Democracy

Abstract (less than 1250 characters):

With Arab Spring Revolutions struggling to gain democracy and political freedom, it is essential to understand the factors that allow a third-world country the ability to forge a democratic future. This case study comparing the political development of Tunisia and Algeria outlines the importance of education, women's rights, and nation-supporting militaries to the success, and even initiation, of a democratic revolution. Since these two Maghreb countries have similar people, history, and resources, but profoundly different outcomes, they make an excellent case to examine in order to determine why Tunisia excelled at their quest for true democracy and Algeria still struggles under militant rule. This examination gives further insight to Tunisia's current democratic status and provides the foundation necessary to predict the likelihood of a lasting Tunisian democracy. In summary, this relevant case study demonstrates how collective thought, women's societal status, and role of the military can determine the success or failure of a democratic revolution.

Overview (less than 250 characters):

This case study comparing the political development of Tunisia and Algeria outlines the importance of education, women's rights, and nation-supporting militaries to the success, and even initiation, of a democratic revolution.

The former French colonies of Algeria and Tunisia share a common background, yet since the two countries became independent in the mid-twentieth century they have developed to vastly differing outcomes. Looking at the current revolution for democracy occurring in Tunisia, and comparing this advanced progression to a democratic, free nation to the immobile progression in Algeria raises questions of how such similar countries can deviate so far from one another. Discerning the differences between the North African neighboring nations allows for an understanding of the conditions essential to leading a developing nation to democratic revolution and progress. With both developing nations having an Arab/Berber population, single authoritarian rulers for long periods of time, and a lower class facing unemployment and poor living conditions, the two countries differ in key areas of internal development: Westernization, and democratization. Tunisia developed an impressive educational system, protected women's rights and status in society, and created a centralized, independent military power. At the same time, Algeria lagged behind in education and literacy, implemented laws restricting women's rights, and formed a politically aligned military. In comparing the trajectories of both countries, it becomes apparent that educated populations, liberated women, and nation-supporting, not regime-supporting, militaries are necessary to lead a developing country to revolutions for democracy, and to the potential for lasting democratic success.

Due to the success of Tunisia's revolution and progression towards democracy, discussion on Tunisia's case will demonstrate the importance of women's rights, education, and the military. By looking at the 2011 Tunisia revolution that currently continues to make progress, intricacies bring out how each of the aspects this paper discusses came into play. In addition, this Tunisian analysis will state where other factors influenced the revolution. This acknowledgement of factors not specifically addressed in this paper, such as religion and the revival of long-



repressed groups, will open the door to further study and call attention to these factors while the progression of Tunisia's fledgling democracy is watched. Even with other influences, the Tunisian call for democracy has prevailed because of their society's education, attention to women's rights, and national alignment of the military.

### **Historical Progression of Tunisia and Algeria**

To understand the progress of the countries, this study must first go back to the era of French colonialism, before Algeria and Tunisia gained independence. Such a background analysis will show how these nations progressed before and after independence, and how this background affected their systems regarding education, women, and role of the military. While both nations experienced French domination and cultural penetration, Algeria and Tunisia experienced very different life circumstances under French rule. While the French introduced the modern school system, suppressed tribal ethnocentrism, and supported the development of a modern economy as a means of "Westernization" in both countries,<sup>1</sup> both nations suffered under the French-favoring political system that produced many policies of inequality over the natives.<sup>2</sup> In both Tunisia and Algeria, the French challenged the traditional systems, but the extent of the implementation of their reform policies differed between the two states. One reason that explains the difference in implementing reforms stems from local resistance to the French. The Algerians violently resisted the French, with the population embracing a culture of war during seven years

---

<sup>1</sup> R. K. Ramazani, "Cultural Change and Intellectual Response in Algeria, Tunisia, and Iran: Review Article," *Comparative studies in Society and History* 6.2 (January 1964): 220.

<sup>2</sup> R. K. Ramazani, "Cultural Change and Intellectual Response in Algeria, Tunisia, and Iran: Review Article," *Comparative studies in Society and History* 6.2 (January 1964): 220-221.

of nationalist revolt.<sup>3</sup> Seeing the imperialist French power as a threat to Algerian society and Islamic beliefs, the Algerians never sought to understand or integrate Western thought. Yet though this same threat existed in Tunisia, the Tunisian intellectuals and leaders attempted to address and even integrate Western thought with Islamic principles<sup>4</sup> as demonstrated by the Tunisian intellectual Mahjub b.Milad who said:

“The new Tunisia is most eager to retain her devotion to her past and those precious deposits of that past which lie in the depths of her heart, but at the same time to devote herself to present realities...she is eager...to provide herself in the ‘contemporary world’ with an abundance of constituents of power and strength and the means to free, happy life!”<sup>5</sup>

While the viewpoint of a single intellectual may not demonstrate a collective thought, Tunisia’s policy actions, statements, and handling of foreign affairs at the time reflects the moderation and compromising attitude of b.Milad’s statement. For example, Tunisians accepted internal autonomy,<sup>6</sup> unlike the Algerians who insisted upon complete independence no matter the means of obtaining it. This difference in approach to French imperialism set Tunisia and Algeria apart from one another even before their ultimate independence.

Once they gained independence, the separation of the social and political trajectories of Tunisia and Algeria started with their handling of the aftermath of French imperialism. With Algeria experiencing a much more violent expulsion of the French as well as the disruption of economic and social order that the war brought, it is expected that the Algerians would have further to restructure after the departure of the French. Yet the radicalization of Algerian society in the revolt against France led to both the radical tendencies of their regime today as well as to a

---

<sup>3</sup> R. K. Ramazani, “Cultural Change and Intellectual Response in Algeria, Tunisia, and Iran: Review Article,” *Comparative studies in Society and History* 6.2 (January 1964): 221.

<sup>4</sup> R. K. Ramazani, “Cultural Change and Intellectual Response in Algeria, Tunisia, and Iran: Review Article,” *Comparative studies in Society and History* 6.2 (January 1964): 222.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> R. K. Ramazani, “Cultural Change and Intellectual Response in Algeria, Tunisia, and Iran: Review Article,” *Comparative studies in Society and History* 6.2 (January 1964): 223



large amount of internal problems left for the fledgling country to handle such as unemployment, administration, and internal security.<sup>7</sup> In contrast, Tunisia's moderation towards the French imperialistic policies led to an intellectual resurgence and political structuring<sup>8</sup> to combat the foreign rule. This approach provided Tunisians the ability to handle the responsibility of a new nation without the internal problems of radicalization and regression as seen in Algeria.

Following independence, both nations began developing differently even though both shared a large youth population with a generally analogous societal development. High birth rates, large coastal populations, and a predominance of youth population (with more than half of the population under age 25 in Tunisia,<sup>9</sup> and 48 percent under the age of 20 in Algeria)<sup>10</sup> characterized both states.<sup>11</sup> With growing populations in highly concentrated densities among coastal regions, the youth of both countries faced high rates of unemployment and low living standards. Yet despite the newly independent states facing similar crises, the two approached reforms quite differently and with products that would set the two countries on separate courses. Such areas of development that varied the greatest between the two nations are the educational systems, the status of women, and the role of the national army. These three areas will continue to shape the futures of both nations, and set each on a course to separate ends. One nation will gravitate towards eventual public demands for democratization and better living and one will lead its people towards repression, stuck in limbo between the advancements of democracy and the regressions of a militant, extremist system.

---

<sup>7</sup> R. K. Ramazani, "Cultural Change and Intellectual Response in Algeria, Tunisia, and Iran: Review Article," *Comparative studies in Society and History* 6.2 (January 1964): 224.

<sup>8</sup> R. K. Ramazani, "Cultural Change and Intellectual Response in Algeria, Tunisia, and Iran: Review Article," *Comparative studies in Society and History* 6.2 (January 1964): 225.

<sup>9</sup> L.B. Ware, "The Role of the Military in the Post-Bourguiba Era," *Middle East Journal* 39.1 (Winter 1985): 31.

<sup>10</sup> Habib Tiliouine, Robert A. Cummins, Melanie Davern, "Measuring Wellbeing in Developing Countries: The Case of Algeria," *Social Indicators Research* 75.1 (January 2006): 6.

<sup>11</sup> S. E. Zaimeche, "Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia: Recent Social Change and Future Prospects," *Middle Eastern Studies* 30.4 (October 1994): 945-946.

### **The Important of the Educational System to Collective Thought**

The first apparent reforms in Tunisia and Algeria took place in the educational systems even before the French withdrew from each nation, shaping the thought and progression of each society. The progressions made in their respectful systems will lead each nation either closer to or further from a public mindset that calls for democratic revolution. Algerians ousted French systems, choosing to regress to pre-colonial educational systems. Using French occupation as a means to solidify Islamic and national identity, the Algerians tried to purge French imperialism from their society. To eradicate the French education system, Algerians used traditional Islamic schools of thought to perpetuate Islamic-Algerian identity as means of fighting the French.<sup>12</sup> In fact, the leaders of Islamic reform took the initiative in creating free schools for Algerian children to try to reform the traditional Qur'anic schools. While the Islamic reformers did want to provide education to those unable to attend public schools, they also had the agenda of combating "Frenchified" Algerians who sought assimilation into France and denied their Algerian identity.<sup>13</sup> These schools then became a basis for providing Islamic and Arabic education, with a main priority of preserving the "Algerian soul" against French culture.<sup>14</sup>

This defense of Algerian identity behind the motives of the Islamic school systems did create a solidified Algerian identity, but it also hindered the scholastic progress of students. By only using one-third of school hours for basic studies such as arithmetic and geography, this

---

<sup>12</sup> John Damis, "The Free-School Phenomenon: The Cases of Tunisia and Algeria," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5.4 (September 1974): 449.

<sup>13</sup> John Damis, "The Free-School Phenomenon: The Cases of Tunisia and Algeria," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5.4 (September 1974): 442.

<sup>14</sup> John Damis, "The Free-School Phenomenon: The Cases of Tunisia and Algeria," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5.4 (September 1974): 442.

Algerian school system stunted the intellectual growth of its students, of whom most would not be capable of progressing to secondary education.<sup>15</sup> As hostility towards the French grew post World War II, schools became nationalist recruitment centers to train militants, and those that remained independent from factions still only saw a small fraction of students continue past primary education.<sup>16</sup> After independence, Algeria still saw a low level of people continuing on to secondary schools and the Islamist, militant identity stemming from the free-school system continued in Algerian society. Such a system of Islamic teachings and nationalist sentiment in the educational system did not emerge as heavily in Algeria's eastern neighbor, Tunisia.

Unlike the Algerians, Tunisians embraced their Western ties and French background, using French systems as a catalyst for education reforms and advancement. Early in the twenty-first century, Tunisian movements stressing the importance of education cropped up around Tunisia, promoting modernization and westernization. The Young Tunisian movement of the 1900's rejected Islamic reform, favoring assimilation to France in order to bring Tunisia to the level of Western nations.<sup>17</sup> By recognizing the need to learn French, the Tunisian school systems developed along French curriculum, with many Tunisians abandoning the traditional Qur'anic schools for the better-developed French schools. Yet, staying true to national identity, this initial movement eventually developed into the bilingual Franco-Arab schools of today, with even modernized Qur'anic schools providing students a certificate of education that promoted them to secondary schools.<sup>18</sup> This aspect, unlike the Algerian educational system, promoted student's

---

<sup>15</sup> John Damis, "The Free-School Phenomenon: The Cases of Tunisia and Algeria," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5.4 (September 1974): 443.

<sup>16</sup> John Damis, "The Free-School Phenomenon: The Cases of Tunisia and Algeria," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5.4 (September 1974): 447.

<sup>17</sup> John Damis, "The Free-School Phenomenon: The Cases of Tunisia and Algeria," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5.4 (September 1974): 435.

<sup>18</sup> John Damis, "The Free-School Phenomenon: The Cases of Tunisia and Algeria," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5.4 (September 1974): 439-40.



scholastic learning and graduation to high-level schools. Demonstrating the Tunisian appreciation for education, and proving its importance to the development of a progressive nation, the first president of Tunisia, Habib Bourguiba, stated that men's way of looking at things and their mental framework can be changed for the better through education.<sup>19</sup>

As the two nations emerged into the twenty-first century, the differences in the educational framework become more apparent as time shows how divergent the two have become, leading either to radicalized, uneducated mentalities or to moderate and western mindsets. This educational difference, originating from the fight for independence and continuing onward through the twentieth century, highlights the gap in development between Algeria and Tunisia. Using statistics and measurements, the Algerian nation continually falls in the lowest ranks of educational development in the Islamic Maghreb. With nearly 48 percent of the population under the age of 20, only 29 percent of the population is students. Additionally, between 500,000 and 560,000 students drop out of school on an annual basis (statistics from 1998).<sup>20</sup> In comparison, the Tunisian average percentage for students continuing on to tertiary education in 2007 was 32%. In Algeria, 24% of students continued on to tertiary education in the same year.<sup>21</sup> This educational disparity between the two nations emphasizes the developmental differences seen within their societies. As Algeria lagged behind academically, the effects of an under-educated society began to emerge in other social areas, particularly the area in which the more-educated Tunisians made vast reforms and advancements following independence: the status of women.

<sup>19</sup> Habib Bourguiba, "The Tunisian Way," *Foreign Affairs* 44.3 (April 1966): 480.

<sup>20</sup> Habib Tiliouine, Robert A. Cummins, Melanie Davern, "Measuring Wellbeing in Developing Countries: The Case of Algeria," *Social Indicators Research* 75.1 (January 2006): 6.

<sup>21</sup> "School Enrollment, Tertiary (%gross)," *The World Bank*, under Data Indicators, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.TER.ENRR/countries/TN-XQ-XT> (accessed March 6, 2012).

## Women's Status in Society and its Implications to Progressive Reform

Following independence, Tunisia and Algeria made vast, sweeping legislation regarding the status and role of women in society, yet the two nations differed tremendously in the trajectory of their laws. These laws affected both women and society, shaping the ability of their societies to function either as a collective unit or as a divided front in the progression towards democracy. As Islamic nations, both Algeria and Tunisia have the same state religion and societal beliefs. Yet, while Tunisia undermined traditional Islamic constraints on women by granting considerable reforms advancing their status, Algeria explicitly confirmed Islamic traditions that restrict women to a subordinate role in society.<sup>22</sup> Even though Algeria exists as a more industrialized, populated, and socialist nation than Tunisia, it does not have the same commitment as Tunisia in pursuing gender equality as such national characteristics would normally point out.<sup>23</sup> The French influence on Tunisian society, as seen in their educational system, may have promoted Tunisian thought towards western ideals. This then advanced the status of women in the minds of native Tunisians well before the legislative power affecting gender equality was passed on to the Tunisian government. If this is the case, then the hostility of the Algerians towards French influence would produce a similar but reverse effect after independence, where reiterating traditionalist views on female status would reaffirm traditional Algerian identity. This colonial era impact and influence over cultural and societal thought would lead the two nations to the implementation of laws greatly affecting the lives of their women.

---

<sup>22</sup> Susan E. Marshall and Randall G. Stokes, "Tradition and the Veil: Female Status in Tunisia and Algeria," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 19.4 (December 1981): 625.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

Realizing the extent of reforms regarding women's rights also illustrates the trajectory of development in Tunisia and Algeria. While both nations have implemented a minimum age for marriage, only Tunisia abolished polygamy, arranged marriages, and male repudiation rights (saying "divorce" three times to constitute legal separation and without needing means to do so), and legally allows the choice for abortion, ability to marry outside of their religion, and family planning programs regardless of marital status.<sup>24,25</sup> Following independence in March of 1956, Habib Bourguiba, the Tunisian president, passed the Tunisian Code of Personal Status on January 1, 1957 which made tremendous advances in women's rights in order to modernize and westernize Tunisian society.<sup>26</sup>

By changing Tunisian laws to retain a mother's rights to her children, to provide protections against spousal abuses, to allow women in the political and professional arena, and to establish the right of a woman to control her own finances, women's status retained and even gained rights in the public, private, professional, and political spectrums of society following independence.<sup>27</sup> Such reforms under the Tunisian Code of Personal Status additionally sought to abolish Shari'a courts in favor of national courts in order to prevent clashes between the orthodox views and the revolutionary reforms established in the Code.<sup>28</sup> In granting such freedoms to women, and preventing a traditionalist interpretation in the courts, the Tunisian laws enabled full participation of citizens in the social and political spheres and encouraged the

---

<sup>24</sup> Susan E. Marshall, "Politics and Female Status in North Africa: A Reconsideration of Development Theory," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 32.3 (April 1984): 510.

<sup>25</sup> Susan E. Marshall and Randall G. Stokes, "Tradition and the Veil: Female Status in Tunisia and Algeria," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 19.4 (December 1981): 636.

<sup>26</sup> George N. Sfeir, "The Tunisian Code of Personal Status (Majallat al-Ahwal al-Shakhsyah)," *Middle East Journal* 11.3 (Summer 1957): 309.

<sup>27</sup> Hafidha Chekir, "Women, the Law, and the Family in Tunisia," *Gender and Development* 4.2 (June 1996): 44-46.

<sup>28</sup> J. N. D. Anderson, "The Tunisian Law of Personal Status," *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 7.2 (April 1958): 264-65.



education and participation of women in positions once only granted to men. These progressive reforms greatly contrast the reforms within the Algerian Family Code.

Following liberation, the Algerian women who participated next to men in the battles against France faced terrible setbacks in the newly independent nation. Once fighting alongside men and carrying weapons to combat the French, the role of Algerian women vastly changed with the implementation of the Family Code in 1984.<sup>29</sup> Almost immediately after independence, the new Algerian government considered women's citizenship as a right that could be revoked, quickly following such inferior status with even further repressive laws under the Family Code.<sup>30</sup> Dictating that women have the legal duty to obey their husbands, denying their right to arrange their own marriage or apply for divorce, and obligating them to breastfeed their children, the Family Code brought back many Islamist traditions not seen since before the French occupation.<sup>31</sup> Because of the hostility to French colonialism, and therefore all western culture, the independent Algerian nation took to extreme measures to ensure ethnic and Islamic revitalization.<sup>32</sup>

Due to the nationalist and Islamist mindset stemming from the battle for independence, the Family Code and other such mentalities prevented the progression of women's rights and limited the progression of the nation. Since the implementation of the Family Code, Algeria has experienced a large rise in homelessness among women and children due to the social law that women have no rights to the family home and are subject to their husband's rights to repudiate

---

<sup>29</sup> Zahia Smail Salhi, "Algerian Women, Citizenship, and the 'Family Code'," *Gender and Development* 11.3 (November 2003): 27.

<sup>30</sup> Zahia Smail Salhi, "Algerian Women, Citizenship, and the 'Family Code'," *Gender and Development* 11.3 (November 2003): 29.

<sup>31</sup> Zahia Smail Salhi, "Algerian Women, Citizenship, and the 'Family Code'," *Gender and Development* 11.3 (November 2003): 30.

<sup>32</sup> Susan E. Marshall and Randall G. Stokes, "Tradition and the Veil: Female Status in Tunisia and Algeria," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 19.4 (December 1981): 643.

them and throw them on the street.<sup>33</sup> With women also having no authority over their children's education and relying upon the fathers to register their children for school, the percentage of educational participation and literacy rates have remained low, especially for girls.<sup>34</sup> All of these laws render fifty-two percent of the population minors (having the equivalent legal status as children), and hinder women from participation in the social or political spectrum.<sup>35</sup> Living as disrespected members of society, women hold no value outside of familial roles, and even those traditional roles scarcely hold respect. When it comes to participation and a voicing of concerns Algerian women have little sway and present no obstacle to individual men, let alone to ruling powers. To have a democratic revolution, the people need a united front to stand against the ruling power, which means including women in political participation to add strength behind the call for democracy. Even so, an educated population and society where women stand as equals to men cannot take on a government if the military powers are aligned with the regime instead of with the national interest.

### **The Role of the Army in Shaping Regimes**

Adding to the disparities of rights and development between Algeria and Tunisia are their armed forces. This third factor, the role of the army, can either promote or restrain democratic progress, leading to fundamental steps towards democratization or to chaotic and militant control, as seen in Tunisia and Algeria, respectively. As in most nations, the army plays a pivotal

---

<sup>33</sup> Zahia Smail Salhi, "Algerian Women, Citizenship, and the 'Family Code'," *Gender and Development* 11.3 (November 2003): 30.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Zahia Smail Salhi, "Algerian Women, Citizenship, and the 'Family Code'," *Gender and Development* 11.3 (November 2003): 35.

role in maintaining order and security, but the army may also act as means to regulate and impose the will of a strongman government.

Algeria's army takes the latter approach, standing as a bulwark against democratic reforms and keeping the public submitted to their regulations. Yet despite this seemingly united movement, Algeria's army is composed of various military districts that recruit their own supporters who act independent of authorities and are poorly trained, mafia-like defenders of particular sects and groups. Additionally, Algeria's soldiers often overstep their bounds due to their training that instills the belief that they are individually responsible for maintaining civil order.<sup>36</sup> This mentality promotes a system where soldiers are accountable to no one, and allows virtual free reign of military affairs over the general population. Indeed, Algeria's army cancelled elections in 1992, officially installing itself as a sovereign force within Algeria and laying the groundwork for the nation to become a military-run state.<sup>37</sup>

Further proving the militancy of Algeria is the fact that the army determines the major economic policies of the state, even though the central government maintains authority over oil revenues, investment, and trade.<sup>38</sup> In this, the authoritarian regime of Algeria considers itself legitimate as its support lies in the army, and the army finds its legitimacy from its revolutionary struggle for independence.<sup>39</sup> Algeria's authoritarian regime finds its strength within the support of the army, which allows for the censorship of all media channels, thereby restricting access to information and impinging on the freedoms of the general public by restricting knowledge of the opposition. In this way, Algeria's army operates as a regime-supporting unit that uses the sovereignty of the government to implement restrictions against the public sector. Such

<sup>36</sup> Lahouari Addi, "Algeria's Army, Algeria's Agony," *Foreign Affairs* 77.4 (July to August 1998): 46.

<sup>37</sup> Lahouari Addi, "Algeria's Army, Algeria's Agony," *Foreign Affairs* 77.4 (July to August 1998): 47.

<sup>38</sup> Lahouari Addi, "Algeria's Army, Algeria's Agony," *Foreign Affairs* 77.4 (July to August 1998): 48.

<sup>39</sup> Lahouari Addi, "Algeria's Army, Algeria's Agony," *Foreign Affairs* 77.4 (July to August 1998): 50.



restrictions suppress opposition and demands for reform while encouraging corruption and oppression to keep a strong centralized power in the factions of the military.

Tunisia's government, similar to Algeria, also used oppression and restriction as means of silencing opposition, yet the role of the army varies greatly from that of Algeria. Established as a forward-moving society embracing western values as an Islamic nation, the government under the past two presidents has greatly restricted Islamic movements by jailing opposition leaders despite stated intents for political pluralism.<sup>40</sup> Yet the Tunisian army remains a separate body of highly professional officers that have not sought control of the state, existing for the defense of the nation against foreign and domestic enemies.<sup>41</sup> Commonly seen by the people as supporters of the Tunisian nation, not of the regime, Tunisia's army has earned a reputation more along the lines of an elite body of protectors than a body of aggressors. The Tunisian military serves as the symbol of national unity and as the link from the people to the government.<sup>42</sup> Instead of the military holding the aggressor role like in Algeria, the police force, under the Minister of the Interior, has earned the reputation as the corrupt, regime-supporting state organization. It is through the security forces that the Tunisian government imposes regulations and restrictions over the people, including constricting devout religious practice and arresting opposition leaders. However, such acts of oppression eventually became means for retaliation and uprising in both Tunisia and Algeria.

By assessing the difference in outcomes of the revolutions seen in Tunisia and Algeria, the validity of the argument that education, women's rights, and the military determine the direction of the outcome of a revolution is clearly evidenced. Both countries experienced revolutions in their history, yet only Tunisia ended up with a successful democratic revolution.

---

<sup>40</sup> L. B. Ware, "The Role of the Military in the Post-Bourgiba Era," *Middle East Journal* 39.1 (Winter 1985): 30.

<sup>41</sup> L. B. Ware, "The Role of the Military in the Post-Bourgiba Era," *Middle East Journal* 39.1 (Winter 1985): 37.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

Examining each case shows how important the underlying base of society is to progressing towards democratic change.

### **Applying the Factors to the Tunisian and Algerian Case Studies**

The factors of education, women's status, and role of the military have led both countries to the uprisings of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, and paved the ways in which the nations would react. Both Tunisia and Algeria practice authoritarian styles of government with glosses of democratic systems. Elections in Algeria are merely a democratic mask that serves to appease the people, but not to change the regime, just as the tightly controlled elections in Tunisia serve as a basis to keep the current regime in place.<sup>43</sup> As is usual for authoritarian regimes, opposition movements and unrest are either appeased or swiftly cracked down upon, and such a reaction has occurred in both nations. Unrest in these countries has typically stemmed from the large population of youth, with the large number of unemployed youth creating the loudest voice of discontent. This occurred in Algeria during the October 1988 riots when unemployment increased among the youth, who then took to the streets to oppose the corrupt government and demand a new system. Following these revolts with fierce repression and use of torture, the Algerian government eventually allowed the formation of political parties.<sup>44</sup> Of course, the main intervening factor for the Algerian government was its closely allied army, which violently cracked down upon the protestors. Despite the harsh crackdown, the factor of unemployment that sparked the revolts in Algeria would turn out to become the leading factor of unrest and revolts in both Algeria and Tunisia.

<sup>43</sup> Lahouari Addi, "Algeria's Army, Algeria's Agony," *Foreign Affairs* 77.4 (July to August 1998): 50.

<sup>44</sup> Zahia Smail Salhi, "Algerian Women, Citizenship, and the 'Family Code'," *Gender and Development* 11.3 (November 2003): 31-32.

With General Zine Al-Abidine Ben Ali taking over the Tunisian president Habib Bourguiba on the grounds of protecting society from Islamists, President Ben Ali effectively drew attention away from inflated prices and unemployment among youth, but not for long.<sup>45</sup> Ben Ali's regime did not face the economic problems plaguing Tunisia, just as Algeria did not address the poverty and unemployment of the people in 1988. Instead, he allowed his in-laws to illegally acquire property and economically devastate the nation. However, because of the age of information, especially prominent and accessible among the educated youth who look beyond the tightly-controlled and scripted national media, knowledge of the corruption amid the already high unemployment rates shook Ben Ali's regime on three separate occasions.<sup>46</sup> Just as seen in Algeria, each of these uprisings were fueled and led by the youth of Tunisia who took to the streets to protest and demand reforms. However, such movements did not significantly impact the regime, or even the economic circumstances plaguing the country until the January 2011 uprisings that started in Tunisia.

The success of the 2011 "Jasmine Revolution" in Tunisia that prompted the Arab Spring revolutions allows the perfect opportunity to see just how the Tunisian society catalyzed the calling for democracy into becoming a reality. The analysis of the Tunisian uprising shows the importance that the people's education, the women's equality, and the military's alignment played in causing a democratic transition.

---

<sup>45</sup> Larbi Sadiki, "Ben Ali's Tunisia: Democracy by Non-Democratic Means," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 29.1 (May 2002): 60.

<sup>46</sup> Larbi Sadiki, "Ben Ali's Tunisia: Democracy by Non-Democratic Means," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 29.1 (May 2002): 71.



## **The Tunisian Uprising and Democratic Revolution**

In the midst of rising unemployment, the desperation of an educated yet unemployed young man led to national uprisings that shook Tunisia to its core and forever changed the path towards democratic revolution in authoritarian nations. After a young student from the poor interior town of Sidi-Bouazid burned himself to death in a desperate act to call attention to youth unemployment and government corruption, the Tunisian countryside quickly became enlisted in revolts against the repression and corruption of Ben Ali's regime. Ignited among the educated youth of Tunisia, the revolts spread to the more populated coastal towns where the educational system served as the brewing grounds for revolutionary thought. Yet unlike before, these demonstrations became bloody with the violent crackdown of police security forces. Spurring more anger with the instantaneous sharing of images, videos, and news of the violence against unarmed protestors through the internet, the well-educated Tunisian society began calling for regime change, expression of political and religious thought, and democratic freedoms such as honest elections.<sup>47</sup>

An important factor in the uprising in Tunisia is the large-scale participation in the demonstrations, the sharing of media resources, and the eventual participation of the national army. Just as in prior revolts in both Algeria and Tunisia, these demonstrations began under the youth, but unlike past demonstrations calling for reforms, this uprising called for revolution – democratic revolution. Wanting vast reforms of the entire corrupt, authoritarian political system, the Tunisian people rallied as a nation. Both men and women participated in the mass street

---

<sup>47</sup> Much of this information, and the information following, on the events leading up to and occurring in the Tunisian Revolution is known by the author. She closely followed the uprising through Tunisian contacts who were in Tunisia as first-hand witnesses, and also through the translations of Tunisian forums, articles, and news reports provided by her friend, Imed Rebhi. Many of these facts can be found in articles on Reuters, The Economist, and Tunisian websites dedicated to the revolution.

protests, with women taking active roles carrying posters, chanting slogans, fueling debates, and spreading news on internet forums. Because of the equality among men and women, women were capable of demonstrating and adding to discussions. Even high-ranking female lawyers and politicians risked arrest and beatings to speak out against Ben Ali's regime. The education of the Tunisian people allowed for the discontentment to grow when college graduates could not find work in their areas of expertise. In fact, the school system itself is argued to have slowly fueled this uprising for many years as there is "a relationship between the nature of Tunisia's intellectual resurgence and its experience of thorough-going socio-economic change."<sup>48</sup> Given that the majority of protestors were youth, who are either urban (westernized) or becoming urbanized,<sup>49</sup> their access to online media and networks allowed them to overcome the monitored and regulated national media. Since the official media did not report on the uprisings, the youth's quick organization over Facebook and Twitter spread intellectually appealing messages to others, such as the promise of civil liberties under a new, democratic regime.

In this way, the Tunisian revolution differed from those seen before in Tunisia and Algeria, with educated youth leading the protests, using sources other than main-stream media for information, and having both men and women contribute to the calling for the resignation of the President and his corrupt regime. These factors, although important in shaping the path towards democratic revolution, would have mattered little if it were not for the role of the Tunisian military. While police security forces were brutalizing protestors and shooting to kill, the Tunisian military and its top generals disobeyed orders to shoot protestors, instead turning upon the corrupt regime, defending the protestors from the police forces, and adding to the bureaucratic, legitimate voices calling for the resignation of the President. Protecting the

<sup>48</sup> R. K. Ramazani, "Cultural Change and Intellectual Response in Algeria, Tunisia, and Iran: Review Article," *Comparative studies in Society and History* 6.2 (January 1964): 229.

<sup>49</sup> L. B. Ware, "The Role of the Military in the Post-Bourghiba Era," *Middle East Journal* 39.1 (Winter 1985): 31.

Tunisian population from a domestic threat, the Tunisian army generals convinced President Ben Ali to flee the country and resign his post. Had it not been for this decision to protect the protestors on the part of the army, Tunisia's uprising may not have gone far, just as the Algerian protests and revolts were violently driven back by the Algerian military.

### **Proving the Importance of Education, Women's Status, and the Role of the Army**

The Tunisian call for democratic revolution, which prompted further revolutions calling for democracy and rights across the Arab world, depended on education, female status, and a revolution-aligned army. These factors are not seen in Algeria and are therefore linked to the failure of Algerian uprisings and subsequently to the success of the Tunisian revolution. The role of women played an important part in Tunisia, allowing for the Tunisian population to almost unanimously back the protests and the calling for democratic revolution. Algeria, however, has seen minimal female participation in revolutions due to their unequal status and inability to act independently of male relatives.<sup>50</sup> In fact, women who have taken part in past calls for reforms in Algeria have been taunted, threatened, and called "women of delinquent morals."<sup>51</sup> Such treatment and subservient status of half the population does not mount political or social pressure upon Algeria's regime. With such social views, only half the force as seen in Tunisia's revolution can even appear on the streets of Algeria. Because of the large amount of Algerians not completing school and not having much access to outside forums of discussion and intellectual thought, the people of Algeria are more unlikely to engage in the online sharing of

<sup>50</sup> Zahia Smail Salhi, "Algerian Women, Citizenship, and the 'Family Code'," *Gender and Development* 11.3 (November 2003): 29.

<sup>51</sup> Zahia Smail Salhi, "Algerian Women, Citizenship, and the 'Family Code'," *Gender and Development* 11.3 (November 2003): 33.



and access to information regarding uprisings, further hindering the progress of democratic revolution. Adding to this crippled state of political activism is the Algerian army, which violently intervenes and suppresses revolts that do not align with their Socialist and Islamist agendas. Because the Algerian army is an extension of the government's regime, unlike Tunisia, it is improbable to think they would intervene on the protestor's behalf as seen in Tunisia.

Due to Algeria's repression of women's rights, lacking educational system, and regime-aligned army, the Algerian people have, as of yet, been unable to successfully call for reforms or a democratized state. Much of this inability, however, may stem from the Algerian colonial experience under France when western thought and advances were demonized. Generations of Algerians then grew up under an Islamist and militant system that promoted their view as being nationalistic and any opposing view to be anti-Algerian. Tunisia, on the other hand, grew under the guidance of French systems, and soon after independence even modeled Tunisian systems after the French in order to westernize and modernize the nation. Such thought has penetrated Tunisian society, with advances in women's rights, the educational system, and even in the actions of a Tunisian-backed military. These advances not only westernized Tunisian society, making Tunisians more inclined to western thought, but also promoted the participation of the entire population, most of whom are quite educated. Such advancements have created a stronger Tunisian front against restrictive authoritarian regimes, and allowed the Tunisian people to rise up when finally fed up with the system of corruption.

Despite the successes of the Tunisian Revolution, additional factors came into play that need mentioning and Tunisia's current situation needs assessing. While these additional factors would not come into play in every democratic revolution, the fact that they surfaced in Tunisia shows their importance to revolutions in the Middle East. Although this paper does not detail the

importance of these other factors, there is a responsibility to include them because of their importance and the need for further research in the area. By explaining where Tunisia is currently headed, insight to the democratic transition process, as well as its difficulties, highlights areas to watch in other uprisings.

### **Post Revolution Tunisia: Progression and Unforeseen Obstacles**

Following the toppling of long-time dictator Ben Ali, the Tunisian Revolution remains far from complete, yet as of early 2012 great leaps have been made as well as obstacles put forth that this paper did not yet discuss. Since opposition parties had long been banned from the country, Tunisia first saw an influx of leaders flying in from abroad to start political activism and organization. Originally stating that elections would take place at the end of the summer, Tunisia's interim government wisely decided to push back elections to October to allow for political organizing and registration of smaller political parties. For the first time ever in Tunisia, and arguably in the Middle East, free and fair elections were held that elected the parliament which would draft the new constitution. The moderate Islamic party, Ennahdah, which was long banned for fear of Islamist agendas, came out on top with 89 out of 217 seats. Yet, demonstrating the diversity of political beliefs, the left-wing party Ettakatol won 20 seats, the Progressist Democratic Party took 16, and the remaining seats went to independents, smaller parties, and even communists.<sup>52</sup> This marked the first successful post-Arab Spring Revolution election, yet Tunisia still faces a long road ahead to ensure lasting democratic success.

---

<sup>52</sup> "Final Tunisian Election Results Announced," *Al-Jazeera*, November 14, 2011, under "Africa," <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/11/20111114171420907168.html> (accessed March 4, 2012).

Having visited Tunisia in December 2011 in addition to closely following the events taking place, the author observed the strides Tunisia has made as well as places where the country is unfortunately experiencing regression. The center of Tunis shows the remaining nervousness and instability, with army tanks, soldiers, and barbed wire guarding important buildings such as embassies, political offices, and even the single synagogue. However, the people themselves seem to go about normal life, attending school, mosque, and activities such as shopping with only few, small outlying groups continuing to demonstrate. These groups as well as the continuation of public mistrust of the government are posing the most serious risks to Tunisian stability and democracy. Before the revolution, women hardly wore any type of hijab, or head covering, and went about working and attending school just as any Western girl. Yet, after the revolution, the revitalization of Islamic thought has spread through the country and touched even the most liberal towns on the coast. Women are increasingly wearing not only the hijab, but also the niqab, the full face veil. Extremists such as the Salafis which had suffered under the dictatorial rule of both prior presidents are now cropping up at an alarming pace, closing down schools with their riots that demand the legalization of the currently outlawed niqab. Salafists have murdered two prostitutes, threatened to hurt girls attending university, and even held protests consisting of American flag burning.

Such actions and sights would have formerly been unthinkable in Tunisia, mostly because the government kept a strong hold on Islamist groups. Yet with the freedoms that came with the revolution the long-subdued Islamist groups are now coming back to life. This aspect is one which this paper had overlooked, due how Westernized Tunisia's society had become. Because Islamist extremism is not a characteristic which all rising countries have as a concern, the argument that development and democracy rest upon education, women's rights, and the

army is still valid to apply to all suppressed states. However, when concerning the countries of the Arab Spring, Islamist agenda is cause for concern, mostly because it has historically taken education and rights away from women – which is necessary for the progression of the state to begin with. However, freedom to practice ones religion is a basic right that cannot fall due to fear of any religious group. Therefore, the rising state wishing for democratic transition must tread carefully, especially when concerning any group that has long suffered under the regime.

In Tunisia, practicing Muslims were long considered suspicious, and devout people often disappeared to never return. It makes sense that the Islamist groups such as the Salafis would roar back to life when given the opportunity, often with anger for having endured years of suppression. Yet true democracies cannot stomp out such movements in fear, instead providing equal opportunity and representation under secular systems in order to prevent the rise of potential degenerate theocracies and dangerous extremist movements. To combat this potential threat towards society and women, Tunisia needs to continue the path of democracy, separating church and state, and ensuring that laws protecting women's rights are permanent. Their strength has long lied in the power of a united people, in the education of the population, and the ambition of the young to make change for the better. One can maintain confidence in Tunisians by acknowledging that the outlying extremists are only small minorities, and that the vast majority of the population is young, ambitious, educated, and organized. This path towards democracy will challenge Tunisia's fledgling government, yet so far the state has held its ground against extreme movements, and appears to progress towards democracy each day.



## Conclusion

Due to the similarities between Tunisia and Algeria, a comparison regarding the disparities between the two nations' educational systems, women's status, and role of the army leads to the conclusion that these factors have influenced the ability of their nation to demand democratic revolution. While having similar backgrounds and demographics, including their former French occupation, Arab/Berber population, and repressive authoritarian regimes, the two nations began developing quite differently, allowing for the perfect case study scenario. The obstacles Algeria faces are similar to many states around the world, and the successes of Tunisia demonstrate the ability for a rising country to eventually meet the social criteria necessary to stage a democratic revolution. Education of the people leads to organization, informed individuals, and leaders necessary to begin the call for democracy. Women's rights uphold an equal standard that allow women to join the ranks of the educated, add political pressure, and ensure the social and political progression of the nation. The military's alignment determines the success of the revolution, either backing the rights of the protestors or coming down on the side of the regime to crush opposition and democratic transition. Such factors necessary for democratic revolution are seen among other countries, making this analysis critical for determining the success of current and future revolutions. With this process, the current revolutions in Egypt, Syria, Yemen, and Bahrain can be assessed, and their success potentially predicted, based upon meeting the three factors outlined in this paper. Additionally, this approach provides a process to assess where a particular revolution's downfall may exist, allowing for advance aid to prop up budding revolutions. While there is no universally applicable route to democratization, the role of education, women, and national army are vital for creating

an environment where the citizens want to, and are capable of, calling for a democratic revolution.<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup>Larbi Sadiki, "Ben Ali's Tunisia: Democracy by Non-Democratic Means," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 29.1 (May 2002): 62.

## Bibliography

- Addit, Lahouari. "Algeria's Army, Algeria's Agony." *Foreign Affairs* 77.4 (June to August 1998): 44-53.
- Anderson, J.N.D. "The Tunisian Law of Personal Status." *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 7.2 (April 1958): 262-279.
- Bourguiba, Habib. "The Tunisian Way." *Foreign Affairs* 4.3 (April 1966): 480-488.
- Chekir, Hafidha. "Women, the Law, and the Family in Tunisia." *Gender and Development* 4.2 (June 1966): 43-46.
- Damis, John. "The Free-School Phenomenon: The Case of Tunisia and Algeria." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5.4 (September 1974): 434-449.
- "Final Tunisian Election Results Announced." *Al-Jazeera*. November 14, 2011. Under "Africa." <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/11/20111114171420907168.html> (accessed March 4, 2012).
- Jones, Marie Thourson. "Regional Disparities and Public Policy in Tunisian Education." *Comparative Education* 22.3 (1986): 201-220.
- Marshall, Susan E. "Politics and Female Status in North Africa: A Reconsideration of Development Theory." *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 32.3 (April 1984): 499-524.
- Marshall, Susan E. and Randall G. Stokes. "Tradition and the Veil: Female Status in Tunisia and Algeria." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 19.4 (December 1981): 625-646.
- Ramazani, R.K. "Cultural Change and Intellectual Response in Algeria, Tunisia, and Iran: Review Article." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 6.2 (1964): 219-229.
- Sadiki, Larbi. "Ben Ali's Tunisia: Democracy by Non-Democratic Means." *British Journal of*

*Middle Eastern Studies* 29.1 (May 2002): 57-78.

Salhi, Zahia Smail. "Algerian Women, Citizenship, and the 'Family Code'." *Gender and Development* 11.3 (November 2003): 27-35.

"School Enrollment, Tertiary (%gross)." *The World Bank*. Under Data Indicators.

<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.TER.ENRR/countries/TN-XQ-XT> (accessed March 6, 2012).

Sfeir, George N. "The Tunisian Code of Personal Status (Majallat al-Ahwal al-Shakhsyah)." *Middle East Journal* 11.3 (Summer 1957): 309.

Tiliouine, Habib, Robert A. Cummins, and Melanie Davern. "Measuring Wellbeing in Developing Countries: The Case of Algeria." *Social Indicators Research* 75.1 (January 2006): 1-30.

Ware, L.B. "The Role of the Military in the Post-Bourguiba Era." *Middle East Journal* 39.1 (Winter 1985):27-47.

Zaimeche, S.E. "Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia: Recent Social Change and Future Prospects." *Middle Eastern Studies* 30.4 (October 1994): 944-955.